

JUN 30 1949



*For*  
**FREEDOM**  
*and*  
**PEACE**

ADDRESS by PAUL ROBESON at WELCOME HOME RALLY

NEW YORK, JUNE 19, 1949

## FOREWORD

On Sunday, June 19, 1949, three days after his arrival back home in the United States from a four-month concert and speaking tour which took him to eight countries of western and eastern Europe, Paul Robeson delivered a major address to a cheering audience of 5,000 people at a Welcome Home Rally held in his honor at Rockland Palace in Harlem, New York, under the auspices of the Council on African Affairs.

Robeson was hailed by record audiences in the countries he visited. He was among the guests of honor invited from abroad to participate in the Soviet Jubilee, June, 5, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the birth of the great Russian poet, Alexander Pushkin.

In addition to his concerts, Robeson addressed scores of political rallies throughout England, speaking of himself as a representative of "the other side of America." To his audiences and to progressive European newspapers he gave the facts concerning the fight of Negro Americans to achieve their rights as citizens, as symbolized by the campaigns to free Mrs. Ingram and the "Trenton Six." And his cutting words also stung his European listeners into a new awareness of the struggles of the African and Caribbean peoples to throw off the yoke of colonial bondage.

Thus Paul Robeson followed in the footsteps of Frederick Douglass in arousing world support for the Negro's present-day struggle for freedom.

But here in America the forces of reaction, joined by misleaders among the Negro people, launched a campaign of vituperation against Robeson, using as their excuse his statement at the Paris Peace Conference expressing the Negro people's refusal to join in a war on behalf of the oppressors of colonial and subject peoples and against the friends and allies of the Negro people.

In his address on June 19, here reproduced in response to widespread demand, Robeson explained fully what he meant and means by that statement and why he stands firmly by it.

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# For FREEDOM and PEACE

Address by PAUL ROBESON  
at WELCOME HOME RALLY  
NEW YORK, JUNE 19, 1949

THANKS for the welcome home. I have traveled many lands and I have sung and talked to many peoples. Wherever I appeared, whether in professional concert, at peace meetings, in the factories, at trade union gatherings, at the mining pits, at assemblies of representative colonial students from all over the world, always the greeting came: "Take back our affection, our love, our strength to the Negro people and to the members of the progressive movement of America."

It is especially moving to be here in this particular auditorium in Harlem. Way back in 1918, I came here to this very hall from a football game at the Polo Grounds between Rutgers and Syracuse. There was a basketball game between St. Christopher and Alpha. Later I played here for St. Christopher against the Alphas, against the Spartans, and the Brooklyn YMCA, time and time again. This was a home of mine. It is still my home.

I was then, through my athletics and my university record, trying to hold up the prestige of my people; trying in the only way I knew to ease the path for future Negro boys and girls. And I am still in there slugging, yes, at another level, and you can bet your life that I shall battle every step of the way until conditions around these corners change and conditions change for the Negro people all up and down this land.

## Long, Hard Road

The road has been long. The road has been hard. It began about as tough as I ever had it—in Princeton, New Jersey, a college town of Southern aristocrats, who from Revolutionary time transferred Georgia to New Jersey. My brothers couldn't go to high school in Princeton. They had to go to Trenton, ten miles away. That's right—Trenton, of the "Trenton Six." My brother or I could have been one of the "Trenton Six."

Almost every Negro in Princeton lived off the college and accepted the social status that went with it. We lived for all intents and purposes on a Southern plantation. And with no more dignity than that suggests—all the bowing and scraping to the drunken rich, all the vile names, all the Uncle Tomming to earn enough to lead miserable lives.

## Childhood of Poverty

My father was of slave origin. He reached as honorable a position as a Negro could under these circumstances, but soon after I was born he lost his church and poverty was my beginning. Relatives from my father's North Carolina family took me in, a motherless orphan, while my father went to new fields to begin again in a corner grocery store. I slept four in a bed, ate the nourishing greens and cornbread. I was and am forever thankful to my honest, intelligent, courageous, generous aunts, uncles and cousins, not long divorced from the cotton and tobacco fields of eastern North Carolina.

During the Wallace campaign, I stood on the very soil on which my father was a slave, where some of my cousins are sharecroppers and unemployed tobacco workers. I reflected upon the wealth bled from my near relatives alone, and of the very basic wealth of all this America beaten out of millions of the Negro people, enslaved, freed, newly enslaved until this very day.

## No Jim Crow Americanism

And I defied—and today I defy—any part of an insolent, dominating America, however powerful; I defy

any errand boys, Uncle Toms of the Negro people, to challenge my Americanism, because by word and deed I challenge this vicious system to the death; because I refuse to let my personal success, as part of a fraction of one per cent of the Negro people, to explain away the injustices to fourteen million of my people; because with all the energy at my command, I fight for the right of the Negro people and other oppressed labor-driven Americans to have decent homes, decent jobs, and the dignity that belongs to every human being!

Somewhere in my childhood these feelings were planted. Perhaps when I resented being pushed off the sidewalk, when I saw my women being insulted, and especially when I saw my elder brother answer each insult with blows that sent would-be slave masters crashing to the stone sidewalks, even though jail was his constant reward. He never said it, but he told me day after day: "Listen to me, kid." (He loved me very dearly.) "Don't you ever take it, as long as you live."

## I'm Looking for Freedom

I realized years after how grateful I was for that example. I've *never* accepted any inferior role because of my race or color. *And, by God, I never will!*

That explains my life. I'm looking for freedom, *full freedom*, not an inferior brand. That explains my attitude to different people, to Africa, the continent from which we came. I know much about Africa, and I'm not ashamed of my African origin. I'm *proud* of it.



The rich culture of that continent, its magnificent potential, gives me plenty of cause for pride. This was true of the deep stirrings that took place within me when I visited the West Indies in January. This explains my feeling toward the Soviet Union, where in 1934 I for the first time walked this earth in complete human dignity, a dignity denied me at the Columbia University of Medina, denied me everywhere in my native land, despite all the protestations about freedom, equality, constitutional rights, and the sanctity of the individual.

## Individual Fame No Answer

And I say to the New York *Times* that personal success can be no answer. It can no longer be a question of an Anderson, a Carver, a Robinson, a Jackson, or a Robeson. It must be a question of the well-being and opportunities not of a few but for *all* of this great Negro people of which I am a part.

There, in my childhood, I saw my father choose allies. To him, it was the Taylor Pines' of the Wall Street millionaires. They helped the church. They spread around a little manna now and then—that was an age of philanthropy. But I recall that my father could never think of attacking these men for the conditions of those times. Always one had to bend and bow.

## Basic Change Demanded

That was forty years ago. These present-day sycophants of big business, these supposed champions of

Negro rights, can't grow up to the knowledge that the world has gone forward. Millions and millions of people have wrung their freedom from these same Taylor Pines', these same Wall Street operators, these traders in the lives of millions for their greedy profits. There is no more Eastern Europe to bleed; no more Russia, one-sixth of the earth's surface, to enslave; no more China at their disposal.

They can't imagine that our people, the Negro people, — forty millions in the Caribbean and Latin America, one hundred and fifty millions in Africa, and fourteen million here, today, up and down this America of ours, — are also determined to stop being industrial and agricultural serfs. They do not understand that a new reconstruction is here, and that this time we will not be betrayed by any coalition of Northern big finance barons and Southern bourbon plantation owners. They do not realize that the Negro people, with their allies, other oppressed groups, the progressive sections of labor, millions of the Jewish and foreign-born of former white indentured labor, north, south, east and west, in this day and time of ours are determined to see some basic change.

Roosevelt foreshadowed it. We are going to realize it! We were fooled in 1948. We aren't going to be fooled in 1949, 1950, and '51 and '52. We are going to fight for jobs and security at home, and we are going to join the forces of friendship and cooperation with advanced peoples and move on to build a decent world.

## Stooges for White Masters

And you stooges try to do the work of your white bourbon masters, work they have not the courage to do. You try to play the role of cowardly labor leaders who are attempting to do the same job in the ranks of labor. Try it, but the Negro people will give you your answer! They'll drive you from public life! The Negro people know when they're being sold down the river. They've been watching a long, long time. It's good the challenge has come. Keep on, and you'll have no magazines in which to publish your viciousness. You'll not have many more opportunities to sell into a new slavery our cousins in Liberia, our relatives in South Africa, our brothers in the West Indies. You'll get your answer — and soon! The Negro people are smoldering. They're not afraid of their radicals

who point out the awful, indefensible truth of our degradation and exploitation.

What a travesty is this supposed leadership of a great people! And in this historic time, when their people need them most. How Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Fred Douglass must be turning in their graves at this spectacle of a craven, fawning, despicable leadership, able to be naught but errand boys, and — at the lowest level — stooges and cowardly renegades, a disgrace to the Negro people and to the real and true America of which they so glibly talk. Let them get their crumbs from their Wall Street masters. Let them snatch their bit of cheese and go scampering rat-like into their holes, where, by heaven, the Negro people will keep them, left to their dirty consciences, if any they have.

## Take a Look at the Record

Now, let's get out the record. In 1946, I declared in St. Louis on the picket line against segregation of Negro people that I would give up my professional career, then at its height, to devote my time and energy to the struggle for the liberation of the Negro people. I appeared everywhere, north, south, east, and west, for Negro colleges, churches, organizations.

I led an anti-lynch crusade to Washington. There I heard our President declare that it was not politically expedient to take any federal action against lynching. You may remember that I said that perhaps the Negro people would have to do something about it themselves. But a committee stepped in — one of those committees to stop the militant Negro struggle. And lynch law is still in committee, while Negroes continue being lynched.

I entered the struggle for peace and freedom with Wallace in 1948, talking at street corner meetings four and five times a day. Without that struggle of the Progressive Party the issues before the people would not have been clarified, and we might now be at war. Wallace made a tremendous contribution time and again to the cause of peace, to Negro freedom, and to American freedom. He said peace was the issue. *Peace was, and is, the issue.* He said a war economy was an economy of scarcity and unemployment. *That it was, and is.* He said it meant the loss of civil liberties, the loss of the freedom of

European countries. *It has meant just that.* He said it meant slavery for colonial people. *That it is fast becoming.* He said it meant domestic fascism. *That is just around the corner.*

Negroes rallied to Wallace's banner, the banner of their freedom. Then their trusted leaders stepped in to confuse and to frighten them. They sold them a hollow bill of goods in the Democratic Party, and a nominee that even these leaders did not trust. Remember, they wanted Eisenhower. But they were afraid of any militant struggle for our people. Where is the civil rights program? Are we still subject to terror? Ask Mrs. Mallard, ask the boys in Virginia, ask the Trenton Six: "Where are our liberties?"

### On the Side of Labor

As a consequence of my activities for Negro freedom, I had 86 concerts cancelled out of 86. Of course, these were very special concerts. I don't blame auto barons in Detroit for not wanting to pay to hear me when I was in Cadillac Square fighting for the auto workers. I don't blame the iron-ore owners of the Michigan and Minnesota iron-ore ranges for not wanting to hear me when I was on picket lines for the steel workers in these regions. And so with the packinghouse owners of Chicago, or the ship-owners of the east and west coasts, or the sugar plantation owners of Hawaii.

Well, they can have their concerts! I'll go back to their cities to

sing for the people whom I love, for the Negro and white workers whose freedom will insure my freedom. I'll help, together with many other progressive artists, whenever I can get the time from freedom's struggle, to show how culture can be brought back to the people. We created it in the first place, and it's about time it came back to us!

Today the fight is still on for peace and freedom. Concerts must wait. There is a fierce political struggle which must be won. However, I decided to go to Europe to resume my professional concerts for a very short period, in order to make it perfectly clear that the world is wide and no few pressures could stop my career. Let's go to the record: Albert Hall (London) with its 8,000 seats sold out twice with a five dollar top; 10,000 in the Harringay Arena; thousands turned away all over Europe—the most successful concert tour of my career.

Why? Because I came to the English people from *progressive America*, from the America of Wallace and the Progressive Party, from the America of the twelve great Communist leaders who are on trial for their devotion to the Negro people and to the American working class; because I came from Negro America whose struggle had become known to the English during the war when a folk saying grew up: "We love those American soldiers, the black and the brown ones."

## Belongs to Working People

I finished my professional tour at its height and announced that never again would I sing at a five

dollar top, that I would sing at prices so that workers could come in comfort and dignity. I did this because I belonged to working people. I struggled as a boy in the brick-yards, on the docks, in the hotels to get a living and an education. Ninety-five per cent of the Negro people are workers. So I said that my talents would henceforth belong to my people in their struggle. And I acted on this. Thousands and thousands came. That's my answer to the bourbons who think they can end my career!

Later I toured England in peace meetings for British-Soviet friendship, did a series of meetings on the issues of freedom for the peoples of Africa and the West Indies, and on the question of the right of colored seamen and colored technicians to get jobs in a land for which they had risked their lives. Ten thousand people turned out to a meeting in Liverpool on this latter issue.

## British Miners Aid Africans

I stood at the coal pits in Scotland and saw miners contribute from their earnings \$1,500 to \$2,000 for the benefit of African workers. I helped build up a substantial fund in England to help the cause of African freedom, saw this whole question of the relation of English and colonial peoples raised to a new level as English workers came to understand that if cheap labor could be obtained in Africa or the West Indies or in Southeast Asia, their living standards in England would suffer accordingly. This is a lesson white workers in America must increasingly learn. For the tentacles of



American imperialism are stretched far and wide into colonial countries: Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Trinidad, Panama; down through Latin America; in the Philippines and some parts of the East; and all over the continent of Africa. White workers in America must be aware of this and watch it closely. ✓

## Scandinavians Want Peace

Then I moved into Scandinavia. Through a stroke of circumstance, I was booked through *Politiken*. This was an old liberal newspaper in years gone by, but the pressures of present-day American imperialism, exerted mainly through the Marshall Plan, had caused all pretense of liberalism to vanish. I read an editorial of *Politiken* in England supporting the Atlantic Pact, attacking the Eastern Democracies and the Soviet Union. I immediately asked that my contracts be cancelled. I explained to the press that it was unthinkable that I could appear under the sponsorship of a paper which had allied itself with an imperialism which had enslaved my father and forefathers and was in the process of enslaving my brothers and sisters in Africa, Latin America, the West and East Indies, and which was trying to work up a war against the greatest champion of the rights of colonial and exploited peoples, — the Union of Soviet Republics.

The contracts cancelled, I sang for the newspapers of the progressive and Communist forces of Scandinavia (papers like the *Daily Worker*). All the other press had gone the way of the Reuthers, Murrays, Careys, Townsends, et al,

who have betrayed American workers and the Negro people to American, British, Dutch, French, Belgian and Japanese imperialists.

Thousands upon thousands in the Scandinavian countries turned out in support of peace and against the Atlantic Pact. These countries of Scandinavia had been freed by Soviet armies, had erected monuments to Soviet heroes. It was unthinkable that they would join the fascist elements of Western Germany and Vichy France against their natural friend and ally. It was clear from the meetings that the great majority of Scandinavian people did not support their governments. I am sure American imperialism is aware of this.

My role was in no sense personal. I represented to these people Progressive America, fighting for peace and freedom, and I bring back to you their love and affection, their promise of their strength to aid us, and their gratefulness for our struggles here. They beg us to send more progressive Americans—Wallace, Marcantonio, trade unionists, Negro and white. And they all sent special messages to the Negro people, assuring them of their support of the liberation of Negro peoples everywhere.

Our allies stretch far and wide and they beg us for information and for collective united action. If the originators of the vicious Atlantic Pact can get in a huddle to plot joint action against us, one by one, let us get together to see that nobody can ever take us one by one, that they will have to engage us as a strong, unbending, united force for the peace and freedom of all oppressed peoples.

# Marshall Plan, Atlantic Pact Spell New Slavery

Why did I take this stand on the Atlantic Pact — the Arms Pact — and its forerunner, the Marshall Plan? Let us examine the results of the Marshall Plan. We don't need to guess and theorize. Western European countries have completely lost their freedom. This was honestly acknowledged everywhere. American big business tells all of Western Europe what to do, what it can produce, where it must buy, with whom it can trade. And finally, with the Atlantic Pact, the western Europeans are told that they must be ready to die to the last man in order to defend American Big Business.

The Eisler case illustrated the European people's revolt against American domination. For the English people decided this was too much. They still have some respect for their judicial law, extending from Magna Charta days, — different from us as yet here in America with our Foley Square travesties. The English people move from below — it was a mass movement which forced their government to retreat on Eisler and tell the United States, "Nothing doing." And the Communists of Great Britain started the defense which soon involved great sections of the British people—another important lesson for us. For British people knew that if Eisler was not freed, no longer could they themselves be protected under British law and the whole structure of British freedom would be in danger.

That is just as true here. If the twelve Communists are not freed,

all Americans can say goodbye to their civil liberties. *Especially* will we Negro people be forced to say goodbye to any attempts to add to the few civil liberties we as yet have. Just as a mass movement in a few days won this tremendous victory for peace and freedom in London—I was there at the time—so we here in New York and America can do the same if we act with speed and courage in the cause of *our* freedoms, not just those of the "Twelve."

But beyond this strangling of Western Europe, the real meaning of the Marshall Plan is the complete enslavement of the colonies. For how can British, French and other Western European bankers repay Wall Street? Only in raw materials — in gold, copper, cocoa, rubber, uranium, manganese, iron ore, ground nuts, oils, fats, sugar, bananas. From where? Why, from South Africa, Nigeria, East Africa, French Africa, Belgium Congo, Trinidad, Jamaica, Cuba, Honduras, Guatemala, Viet Nam, Malaya. The Marshall Plan means enslavement of our people all over the earth, including here in the United States on the cotton and sugar plantations and in the mines of the North and South.

## Africa and Mississippi— Two Sides of Same Coin

And the Atlantic Pact means legal sanction for sending guns and troops to the colonies to insure the enslavement and terrorization of our people. They will shoot our people down in Africa just

as they lynch us in Mississippi. That's the other side of the same coin.

For who owns plantations in the South? Metropolitan Life — yes, the same Metropolitan Life Insurance Company that owns and won't let you live in the Stuyvesant Town flats in New York. It is such giant financial interests that are getting millions from the Marshall Plan. They enslave us, they enslave Western Europe, they enslave the colonies.

Many of our Negro leaders know this. But some of these so-called distinguished leaders are doing the dirty work for Stettinius, aiding his scheme for the exploitation of Liberia and its people, or are serving as errand boys for Forrestal's cartel interests, even though the chief has now departed. And there are a few other of these so-called Negro leaders who are too low and contemptible to give the courtesy of mention.

## The Roosevelt-Haters

Are these financial big boys America? No! They are the former enemies of Roosevelt. They were the ones who were glad when Roosevelt died. They are the same ones whom Roosevelt said were the core of American fascism. They are the allies of the remains of the Hitler entourage, that Hitler who

burned up eight million of a great Jewish people and said he would like to burn up fourteen million of us. They are the friends of Franco, the living representatives of the Spanish Conquistadores who enslaved us and still enslave us in Latin America. They are the ones who hate American democracy as did the enemies of Jefferson and Lincoln before them. *They are no part of America!* They are the would-be preservers of world fascism and the enemies of progressive America!

And they are in the government, too, — you saw them deny your civil rights on the floors of Congress; you saw them throw our promised civil rights right into our teeth, while our supposed chief defender enjoyed the sun down in Florida, a state that is the symbol, of course, of the freedom and equality of the Negro people.

And now this greedy section of democratic America, by corrupting our leaders, by shooting us as we attempt to vote, by terrorizing us as in the case of the "Trenton Six," has the gall to try to lure us into a war against countries where the freedoms that we so deeply desire are being realized, together with a rich and abundant life, the kind of life that should be ours also, because so much of America's wealth is realized from our blood and from our labor.

# What I Saw in Eastern Europe

My last weeks abroad were spent in these countries to the East, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and finally the Soviet Union. Here thousands of people — men, women, children—cried to me to thank progressive America for sending one of its representatives, begged me so to take back their love, their heartfelt understanding of the suffering of their Negro brothers and sisters, that I wept time and time again. Whole nations of people gave me a welcome I can never forget — a welcome not for me, Paul Robeson, but in your name, the name of the Negro people of America, of the colonies; in the name of the progressive America of Wallace and the Progressive Party; and in the name of the twelve Communist leaders. Outstanding people in the government treated me with the greatest respect and dignity because I represented *you* (but there were no calls from the American embassies).

Here in these countries are *the people*; their spokesmen are in the forefront of our struggle for liberation — on the floor of the United Nations, in the highest councils of world diplomacy. Here in the Soviet Union, in Czechoslovakia, in battered but gallant Warsaw with its brave saga of the ghetto, are the nations leading the battle for peace and freedom. They were busy building, reconstructing; and the very mention of war caused one to look at you as if you were insane.

I was in Stalingrad. I saw a letter from President Roosevelt, — no

equivocation there. It said that in Stalingrad came the turning point in the battle for civilization. I stood in the little rectangle where the heroic people of Stalingrad fought with their backs to the mighty Volga — and saved us — saved you and me from Hitler's wrath. We loved them then. What has happened to us? For they are the same, only braver. Midst their ruins, they sing and laugh and dance. Their factories are restored — fifty per cent above prewar. I sang at their tractor factory and saw a tractor—*not a tank*—coming off the line every fifteen minutes. It was a factory built by Soviet hands, Soviet brains, Soviet know-how.

## They Want Peace!

They want peace and an abundant life. Freedom is already theirs. The children cried, "Take back our love to the Negro children and the working class children." And they clasped and embraced me literally and symbolically for you. I love them.

Here is a whole one-sixth of the earth's surface, including millions of brown, yellow and black people who would be Negroes here in America and subject to the same awful race prejudice that haunts us. In this Soviet Union, the very term "backward country" is an insult, for in one generation former colonial peoples have been raised to unbelievable industrial and social levels. It is, indeed, a vast new concept of democracy. And these achievements make completely ab-



surd the solemn pronouncements that it will take several generations, maybe hundreds of years, before we Negro people in the West Indies, Africa and America can have any real control over our own destiny.

Here is a whole nation which is now doing honor to our poet Pushkin—one of the greatest poets in history—the Soviet people's and our proud world possession. Could

I find a monument to Pushkin in a public square of Birmingham or Atlanta or Memphis, as one stands in the center of Moscow? No. One perhaps to Goethe, but not to the dark-skinned Pushkin.

Yes, I love this Soviet people more than any other nation, because of their suffering and sacrifices for us, the Negro people, the progressive people, the people of the future in this world.

## The Negro People Oppose Anti-Soviet War

At the Paris Peace Conference I said it was unthinkable that the Negro people of America or elsewhere in the world could be drawn into war with the Soviet Union. I repeat it with hundred-fold emphasis. **THEY WILL NOT.**

And don't ask a few intellectuals who are jealous of their comfort. Ask the sugar workers whom I saw starving in Louisiana, the workers in the cotton lands and the tobacco belts in the South. Ask the sugar workers in Jamaica. Ask the Africans in Malan's South Africa. Ask *them* if they will struggle for peace and friendship with the Soviet people, with the peoples of China and the new democracies, or if they will help their imperialist oppressors to return them to an even worse slavery. The answer lies there in the millions of my struggling people, not only the 14 million in America, but the 40 million in the Caribbean and Latin America and the 150 million in Africa. No wonder all the excitement! For one day this mighty mass will strike for freedom, and a new

strength like that of gallant China will add its decisive weight to insuring a world where all men can be free and equal.

I am born and bred in this America of ours. I want to love it. I love a part of it. But it's up to the rest of America when I shall love it with the same intensity that I love the Negro people from whom I spring, — in the way that I love progressives in the Caribbean, the black and Indian peoples of South and Central America, the peoples of China and Southeast Asia, yes suffering people the world over, — and in the way that I deeply and intensely love the Soviet Union. That burden of proof rests upon America.

Now these peoples of the Soviet Union, of the new Eastern Democracies, of progressive Western Europe, and the representatives of the Chinese people whom I met in Prague and Moscow, were in great part Communists. They were the first to die for our freedom and for the freedom of all mankind. So I'm not afraid of Communists;

no, far from that. I will defend them as they defended us, the Negro people. And I stand firm and immovable by the side of that great leader who has given his whole life to the struggle of the American working class, Bill Foster; by the side of Gene Dennis;

by the side of my friend, Ben Davis; Johnny Gates, Henry Winston, Gus Hall, Gil Green, Jack Stachel, Carl Winter, Irving Potash, Bob Thompson, Johnny Williamson, — twelve brave fighters for my freedom. Their struggle is *our* struggle.

## For Unity of the Negro People with Their Allies

But to fulfill our responsibilities as Americans, we must unite, especially we Negro people. We must know our strength. We are the decisive force. That's why they terrorize us. That's why they fear us. And if we unite in all our might, this world can fast be changed. Let us create that unity now. And this important, historic role of the Negro people our white allies here must fully comprehend. This means increasing understanding of the Negro, his tremendous struggle, his great contributions, his potential for leadership at all levels in the common task of liberation. It means courage to stand by our side whatever the consequences, as we the Negro people fulfill our historic duty in Freedom's struggle.

If we unite, we'll get our law against lynching, our right to vote and to labor. Let us march on Washington, representing 14,000,000 strong. Let us push aside the sycophants who tell us to be quiet.

The so-called western democracies — including our own, which so fiercely exploits us and daily denies us our simple constitutional guarantees — can find no answer before the bar of world justice for their treatment of the Negro people. Democracy, indeed! We must have the courage to shout at the

top of our voices about our injustices and we must lay the blame where it belongs and where it has belonged for over 300 years of slavery and misery: right here on our own doorstep, — not in any far away place. This is the very time when we can win our struggle.

### If We Must Die . . .

And we cannot win it by being lured into any kind of war with our closest friends and allies throughout the world. For any kind of decent life we need, we want, and we *demand* our constitutional rights — RIGHT HERE IN AMERICA. We do not want to die in vain any more on foreign battlefields for Wall Street and the greedy supporters of domestic fascism. If we must die, let it be in Mississippi or Georgia! Let it be wherever we are lynched and deprived of our rights as human beings!

Let this be a final answer to the warmongers. Let them know that we will not help to enslave our brothers and sisters and eventually ourselves. Rather, we will help to insure peace in our time—the freedom and liberation of the Negro and other struggling peoples, and the building of a world where we can all walk in full equality and full human dignity.



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